(b) the reasons for these losses;

(c) whether there is any proposal for its merger with some other Public Sector Undertakings and if so, details thereof; and

(d) whether there is any other proposal to lease it to some private party in case there are no takers from any of the Undertakings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPLLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) HVOC has been incurring losses since 1991-92 as indicated below:

Year	Loss (Rs. in crores)
1991-92	4.56
1992-93	3.53
1993-94 (Provisional)	10.00

(b) After delicensing of Vanaspati industry, a number of new units nave come up which have been given sales tax exemption. This has rendered the older units unviable. Also the refining and packing of imported edible oils for the Public Distribution has declined steeply due to non import of crude edible oils and reduction in import of refined edible oils. These are the main reasons for the losses.

(c) and (d) A number of alternatives, including merger with other undertakings, are under consideration of the Government . No final decision has been taken.

Supply of coffee through PDS

1761. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to supply coffee through Public Distribution System;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Coffee Board has resolved to release 5,000 tonnes of coffee to some of the States for its distribution through the Public Distribution System;

(c) if so, what are the names of such States; and

(d) what will be the price at which coffee will be distributed through Public Distribution System ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (d) The Central Government has no proposal at present to supply coffee through the Public Distribution System (PDS). An Association of Coffee growers has offered to make available 2000 tonnes of pure coffee beans at a reasonable price to the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu for distribution through the PDS. The Association has suggested that the coffee may be drawn from the coffee pooled with the Coffee Board for immediate distribution but has not indicated the price at which they will supply the coffee. They have also not indicated the time by which they will replace the coffee to be issued by the Coffee Board. State Governments can add any item of mass consumption as per local needs and consumer preferences for distribution through the PDS.

Removing packaging restrictions on consumer consumption items

1762. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI
SHRI SANJAY DALMIA :

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to remove packaging restriction on some items of consumer consumption; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the benefits likely to accrue to consumer and the manufacturing industries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION